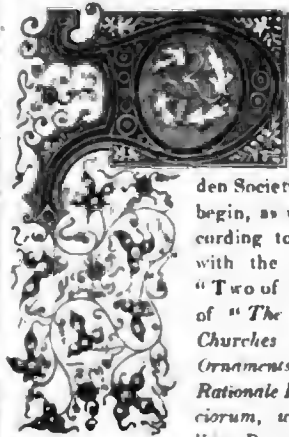


# The Builder.

NO. LXXXI.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 1844.



DESIGNING  
to go through  
a review of  
the works of  
the Cam-  
bridge Cam-

den Society, we this week begin, as with a text, according to our promise, with the translation by "Two of its Founders," of "*The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: from the Rationale Divinarum Officiorum, written by William Durandus, sometime*

*Bishop of Mende.* Leeds, 1843."

We have said we begin with this work as a text, because the bias of mind towards trifling and unsoundness, exhibited by that society, is as much to be seen from this one little work, and the reading of it will give the student a correct idea of what reliance ought to be placed upon such authority, as if he were to waste his time by perusing a thousand folios from the same source.

For the mere information of the reader, who is unacquainted with the scanty memoirs, which are extant relative to Durandus, we copy from the preface the following particulars:—

"William Durandus was born at Puy-moisson, in Provence, about the year 1220. A legend of his native country is told in the present work. He became the pupil of Henry de Luza, afterwards Cardinal of Ostia, and taught canon law at Metz. On this subject he composed a most learned work, the *Speculum Juris*; from which he obtained the title of *Speculator*: and also another treatise called *Repertorium Juris*, and a *Breviarium Glossarum in Tertium Juris Canonici*. His high attainments marked him out for the office of Chaplain to Pope Clement IV. He was afterwards Auditor of the Sacred Palace; and Legate to Pope Gregory X. at the Council of Lyons. He was then made Captain of the Papal forces; in which post he assisted at the reduction of several rebellious cities, and behaved with great courage. He finally became Bishop of Mende in 1286. While in this post and resident at Rome (for he did not personally visit his diocese till 1291; the administration of the diocese being perhaps left to a nephew of the same name who succeeded him), he finished the work, of the first book of which a translation is presented to the reader. But it probably was commenced before: for we find from a passage in its latter half, that so far had been written during the course of this same year 1286. And there is no difficulty in the title, *Episcopus Mimatensis*, which he gives himself in the preface, as this could easily have been added afterwards. But it was certainly published, as Martene observes, before 1295; because Durandus speaks of the Feasts of the Holy Apostles as *semi-doubles*, whereas in that year by a constitution of Pope Urban they were commanded to be observed as *doubles*. The time at which the treatise was written more especially demands our attention; because, did we imagine it only a few years later than it really was, we might well be astonished at finding no reference to the Symbolism of the Decorated Style. The interruptions amidst which the *Rationale* was written are feelingly alluded to by its author in the Epilogue: He also wrote a treatise *De Modo Concilii Generalis habendi*, probably either suggested by, or preparatory to, that of Lyons. He afterwards went on an embassy

from the Pope to the Sultan; and is by some said to have ended this life at Nicosa in Cyprus. But the fact is not so: for having governed his Diocese ten years, and having refused the proffered Archbishopric of Ravenna, he departed at Rome on the Feast of All Saints, 1296, being buried in the Church of Sancta Maria super Minervam, where his monument is yet to be seen."

It is not our intention to deny that there is, always was, and we believe always will be, symbolism in certain things connected with church architecture; thus, for instance, all our own ideas about the formation and subdivision of church architecture have been trinitarian; thence we would never have two windows where there ought to be three; nor if we had our will strictly complied with, would we have any window divided into two, but rather into three compartments, such windows being undoubtedly more tasteful, and admitting of more elegant tracery: though by a very special exertion of bad taste and ignorance the Cam. Camdenists have attempted to deform the fronts of Early English churches by the placing of two windows prominently, instead of the symbolical one, or the trinitarian three, or the tri-uee three united in one, or one composed of three; but as we cannot stop at present to go into the weak reasons given for such a violation of taste and propriety, we shall defer the subject till we come to that depraved part of the Cam. Camdenists' works, in which an attempt has been made to give sanctity to one of the grossest besetting sins into which those ignorant of the truth of architectural composition naturally fall, and for assisting to the promulgation of which barbarous error the Cam. Camdenists can no more be excused than Ovid can for enduing the world with his celebrated "Art of Love;" the error is a childish one, and in the hands of weak and tasteless men has already ruined the fronts of several churches.

It seems the Cam. Cam. members who have put forth this translation, not satisfied with their Ishmaelitic proceedings, lifting their hands against every man, and inciting every man's hand against them; not satisfied with that savage ferocity which has caused bishops, professors, and diocesan societies to cut adrift from them; because the Oxford Gothic Society has conducted itself with a persevering good temper, falling into none of the vagaries and heretical impertinences of the Cambridge Society, must needs, give it a rating for such conduct—but which society is to be preferred, the one for quiet power, or the other for indiscreet agitation, will be seen hereafter.

It seems these translators consider Mr. Lewis's droll performance upon the same matter deserved ridicule; for although on a right subject he was on a wrong scent. We quote their words:—

"Mr. Lewis, in his illustrations of Kilpeck Church (in an appendix to which he has printed a translation of some part of the *Rationale* of our Author), has given a treatise on symbolism generally, and has applied his principles to the explanation of the plan and details of that particular church. His book excited some attention at the time of publication, and was met by considerable ridicule in many quarters. To this we think it was fairly open, since the author did not seem to have grasped the true view of the subject."

Nevertheless to make up for this failure in a professed votary of symbolism, zealously and conscientiously going to work—it further seems that the inspiration of symbolism comes upon sinners who are thinking nothing of the matter; for again, observe the translators:—

"It is very remarkable, as has been already

observed, that the buildings of those who most strongly object to the Principle of Symbolism do in effect contain as striking an exemplification of it as it would be possible to find."

But to the work of Durandus itself. We shall abstain from any observation upon the peculiar tenets of the Roman Catholic Episcopal author, and only touch upon those which it is to be supposed the Anglican church translators have reproduced for the edification of their brethren of the same religion.

We are afraid that Mr. Wylson, who has just given us a treatise upon mortars and cements, has sadly failed of giving us the symbolical meaning of the articles upon which he has so industriously written; for thus says Durandus:—

"10. The cement, without which there can be no stability of the walls, is made of lime, sand, and water. The lime is fervent charity, which joineth to itself the sand, that is, undertakings for the temporal welfare of our brethren: because true charity taketh care of the widow and the aged, and the infant and the infirm: and they who have it study to work with their hands that they may possess wherewith to benefit them. Now the lime and the sand are bound together in the wall by an admixture of water. But water is an emblem of the Spirit. And as without cement the stones cannot cohere, so neither can men be built up in the heavenly Jerusalem without charity, which the Holy Ghost worketh in them."

But admitting the truth of this, what a fellow-sweep does it give to the Ishmaelitic handiwork of the Cam. Camdenites—who ever talk of church-union while they present the glaive to all around.

Then let the dishonest, weak, intemperate, imprudent, who dare to lay a hand to the mural work of churches, learn from the bishop that,

"17. The four side walls are the four cardinal virtues, justice, fortitude, temperance, prudence,"

and admire the deduction:—

"Hence the Apocalypse saith, *THE CITY LIETH FOUR SQUARE.*"

And how virtuous ought glaziers to become while attending to their calling, for—

"The windows are hospitality with cheerfulness, and tenderness with charity."

Further on we have the following:—

"24. The glass windows in a church are Holy Scriptures, which expel the wind and the rain, that is, all things hurtful, but transmit the light of the True Sun, that is, God, into the hearts of the Faithful."

And then, too, how gross, it would seem, have been the vulgar ideas upon the use of window-splays, for again our old author says—

"These are wider within than without, because the mystical sense is the more ample, and precedeth the literal meaning."

And again—

"Also, by the windows the senses of the body are signified: which ought to be shut to the cavities of this world, and open to receive with all freedom spiritual gifts."

Then let us have an orthodox knowledge concerning the iron-work or the small subdivisions of windows, for—

"25. By the lattice work of the windows, we understand the prophets or other obscure teachers of the Church Militant."

But after this we have, amid the symbolical reasoning, a testimony to the subdivision of windows into three, and not into two; for thus Durandus:—

"In which windows there are often two shafts, signifying the two precepts of charity, or because the Apostles were sent out to preach two and two."

Then, concerning towers, spires, and their appendages, we have—

"21. The towers are the preachers and